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Successful new program has great worth to victims of crime

Through a new program called Victim-Locate, the Clerk of the Court partnered with the County Attorney to find victims of crime who were not receiving their court-ordered restitution. As a result, the Clerk's Office recently distributed more than \$384,000 in restitution funds to these victims. Approximately \$74,000 per month is not mailed to victims because of invalid addresses on file with the Clerk's Office. The program, which began earlier this year, was created to address more than \$3 million in pending restitution funds that the Clerk's Office could not release.

Clerk of the Court Michael Jeanes contacted the County Attorney's office to ask for help locating more than 4,000 victims who are owed restitution, leveraging the County Attorney's internal investigative resources and additional databases to locate current addresses. In the first week of their collaborative efforts, the program located 76 victims who had funds on hold with the Clerk's Office.

In addition to the Victim-Locate program, the Clerk's Office has a link on its website called "Finding Funds" that allows individuals and businesses to enter their name or the name of their business to search for court-ordered restitution monies or assets owing to them. If funds exist, forms can be printed and completed and either faxed or mailed to the Clerk's Criminal Financial Obligations Unit. To find funds online, use the Clerk's Unclaimed Property Search at http://www.clerkofcourt.maricopa.gov/Unclaimed/default_new.asp.